

~~OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~SOVIET PROPAGANDA ON EXCHANGES OF DELEGATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

1. Iron Curtain over the United States: Moscow propagandists have consistently capitalized on the obstacles raised to the U.S. entry of Soviet visitors to reinforce the line that the United States, not the USSR, is keeping its people isolated behind an "Iron Curtain." The Iron Curtain charge, revived early in January in connection with the placing of 27 percent of U.S. territory off limits for Soviet citizens, dates from the July 1953 withdrawal of the Soviet chess players from the New York match following the imposition of restrictions on their travel. A widely broadcast article at that time, entitled "Who Is Putting Up the Iron Curtain?", asserted that "foreign guests are welcomed cordially in the USSR."

Emphasis on U.S. obstructionism overshadows comment on the positive results of visits which have materialized. Thus the Soviet chess players' visit, when it finally took place last year, was assessed by PRAVDA as a contribution to mutual understanding, but news items accused the U.S. press of deliberately failing to publicize it (and the NEW YORK TIMES of reporting the match only in order to "slanderosly attack" the Soviet players). There has been very little comment on the U.S. decision to allow Soviet student editors to visit the United States, in contrast with the earlier sustained charges of U.S. stalling on the question of visas.

The U.S. motive, according to Moscow, is to prevent Americans from learning the truth about the USSR, to "isolate them from Soviet culture." The converse argument, that the United States does not want Soviet citizens to see what is going on in the United States, is not used. Mutual desires for friendship on the part of Soviet citizens and "ordinary Americans" is emphasized only to North American listeners; attacks on U.S. official policy are heaped worldwide, although only the U.S. audience heard the unusual charge this month that Americans "are being taught to hate the Soviet people." Propaganda to all audiences stresses U.S. obstruction of cultural relations with foreign countries, and Iron Curtain charges reach their latest peak in connection with the Post Office ban on PRAVDA and IZVESTIA.

2. Student Editors: The State Department's "specious" excuse for postponing consideration of the Soviet visas last fall was assailed as positive evidence that "influential American circles" did not want the visit to take place. PRAVDA recalled the good treatment given the U.S. student journalists in the USSR, pointing out in a February 1955 article that only 29 Soviets had been allowed to visit the United States during 1953-54 as against the 100 U.S. citizens granted entry into the USSR. The TASS report announcing acceptance of the renewed Soviet request for visas sought to sustain the impression of severe U.S. restrictions by pointing out that Tuskegee rather than Atlanta, a prohibited area, had been put on the list of places to be visited and that the State Department refused to allow Soviet interpreters to accompany the visitors. U.S. listeners were told that the belated acquiescence to the visit was forced by an aroused world public.

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1. Farmer Exchange: Extensive publicity has attended the D&S MOINES REGISTER's proposal, SELSKOYE KHOZYAYSTVO's favorable response (Soviet agricultural workers are ready to send a delegation, "naturally, if they will be allowed to enter the United States"), and the 10 March official Soviet note accepting the invitation. Somewhat atypically, initial comment to North America focused on the benefits to be derived specifically from an exchange of agricultural information rather than on the contributions the exchange could make to mutual understanding. A Soviet professor told U.S. listeners on 9 March that the Soviets could learn a great deal, "since the Americans farm economically, with a great saving of labor," and could explain to U.S. farmers their own experience in livestock appraisal, seed selection, and fertilizing. After the official Soviet despatch, propaganda beamed to a wider audience began emphasizing the better understanding and lessening of world tension which result from such exchanges.

Anticipating the propaganda line to be taken in the event of a negative U.S. response, Moscow reported (2 March) President Eisenhower's press conference remarks on the difficulties likely to stem from U.S. laws restricting entry into the United States and publicized the D&S MOINES REGISTER's editorial warning to the State Department that a hasty refusal of visas might give the impression that the United States was gripped by "stupid fears." A 12 March commentary to North America expresses the hope that the State Department will reply "soon." Current attention to the issue is slight, although the Iron Curtain line continues to be marketed widely.

4. IRE Invitation: The State Department's refusal to grant visas to Soviet delegates to the Institute of Radio Engineers conference in New York is promptly assailed as "another manifestation of the U.S. policy against international cooperation."

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